



Brownfields Assessments help Southwest Missouri Indian Center Renovate to Assist More Native American Families

The Southwest Missouri Indian Center (SMIC) was incorporated in Springfield, Missouri in 1976 and has been serving as a staple for the Native American community since 1996. Offering emergency food, clothing, and household goods to Native Americans that meet low-income guidelines in 21 Missouri counties, while also assisting individuals with researching their Native American heritage is the daily business of the SMIC. The work done by the people running the operation is testament to the hearts and passion they have for those in need.



Volunteers and employees sort through donations prior to renovation

Phase I and Phase II petroleum assessments were conducted at the SMIC during the spring of 2008 to help prepare the site to be redeveloped for expanded use. The Phase I found that an adjoining property that previously operated as a service station was an REC based on various unknowns related to the gasoline tank closure and upgradient proximity to the SMIC. It recommend a limited subsurface investigation and a thorough asbestos survey prior to renovations/demolition. The Phase II subsurface investigation did not report any soil or groundwater concentrations above applicable MDNR cleanup standards.

The City of Springfield issued a \$25,000 deferred CDBG loan to assist in the rehabilitation of the SMIC building, and they are also the recipient of an annual Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), a federal, anti-poverty block grant which funds the operations of a state-administered network of local agencies, from which they receive \$46,000 annually. They are one of only two Native American centers in the state of Missouri that is a federal, state, and tribally recognized 501c3 non-profit organization.

The redevelopment is close to complete, and has included the installation of energy efficient windows, increased insulation in the lobby, and insulated front and rear entries. Where clothing and food goods stood in piles all around the building, cabinets and closets have been installed to store donated items until they are given to a family in need. The SMIC is also working on a grant to install computer stations for children and people who do not have home access to a computer. A Boy Scout troop is installing a kiosk that will have information available about Native American heritage and stories for the public.



The Southwest Missouri Indian Center

Through this redevelopment, the SMIC is now able to serve 30-40 families per month, where previously they were only serving 20-30. The environmental justice provided through the loan will have a lasting impact on the Native American people in Southwest Missouri.